UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WHRCF 1.1 VI

DATE: 24 September 1979

SUBJECT: Hazardous Waste Survey, Chlorine Plant
Weyerhaeuser, Longview, Washington

FROM: Carl Kitz
Environmental Emergency Section

TO: The Files

THRU: Ben Eusebio, Chief
Surveillance Branch

On September 4, 1979, a hazardous waste survey was conducted by Jim Oberlander, Washington State Department of Ecology and Carl Kitz, Environmental Protection Agency, at the Weyerhaeuser chlorine plant, Longview, Washington. During this inspection a meeting was held with Ken Johnson, Dean Wertt, and Bernhard Deckman of Weyhaeuser, and a brief plant inspection was conducted. This inspection showed the plant to be a well run and clean operation.

The Weyerhaeuser chlorine plant has been in operation since 1957, producing chlorine by the use of the mercury cell process. This process was changed to a diaphragm cell between 1973 and 1975. All the cells, sludges and equipment involved in the "mercury" process were shipped through arrangements made by Chem Nuclear to the Arlington disposal site. The only significant wastes produced by the diaphragm cell process are salt purification sludges and asbestos waste from replacement of cell diaphragms. Both of these wastes are controlled by DOE and are disposed of at approved landfill sites.

The asbestos produced averages 9 tons per year. This consists of one cell per day replacement. A cell lasts approximately 280 days. The asbestos waste produced is kept wet and is placed in plastic bags and then into metal drums for disposal at the local landfill.

As mentioned previously, the waste and materials involved in the "mercury" process have been removed from the plant site and delivered to Arlington. This included sludge pits which were dug up and shipped by Chem Nuclear to Arlington. The free mercury which amount to 8,000-76 lb flasks were sold for other uses.

During this inspection waste storage piles were noted adjacent to the chlorine plant. This material apparently comes from the other Weyerhaeuser operations in Longview, Washington. It is recommended that this practice be looked into as the amount of waste was fairly substantial and located near the Columbia River. Some problems were noted in the plant which relate to spill hazards. The concentrated sulfuric acid tanks are loaded and unloaded in an area which has high spill potential due to an open effluent channel within 20 feet.